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25X1

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THIS IS UNEVALUATED INFORMATION

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1. The Detpriyemnik (Detskii priyemnik), a reception home for children, was created by the Soviet government to cope with the problem of stray children (besprizorniki) picked up by the militia. [redacted] all Detpriyemniki are subordinate to the Ministry of Internal Affairs (Ministerstvo Vnutrennykh Del - MVD). [redacted] never heard of any direct supervision or logistical support by the MVD. [redacted] whether Detpriyemniki existed before the war, but I did hear of them in 1943. During the war, and immediately afterward, practically every city had one or more Detpriyemniki. Their number, however, began to decrease in 1948 until there are now very few of them. Most Detpriyemniki [redacted] could accommodate 25X1 from 40 to 60 children. [redacted] some of them could process considerably more than this number.
2. Among the stray children who wandered about the Soviet Union there were some whose parents had abandoned them, others who had been left parentless either through the death of their parents or through separation during evacuation, and those who had simply left home for various other reasons. The militia usually did not bother with stray children passing through a city unless the children were detected stealing or begging. When children were apprehended by the militia, they were committed to the nearest Detpriyemnik. Many children were in and out of numerous Detpriyemniki, usually escaping within a day or two after being committed. These escapes were so commonplace that a director of a Detpriyemnik would often inquire of children delivered to him whether or not they planned to escape and, when the children admitted that they had such plans, would immediately order them to leave. This indifferent attitude toward stray children was evident in many Detpriyemniki. [redacted] it stemmed from the fact that there were so many children wandering about that it was impossible to devote much personal attention to them.

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3. Most homeless children lived by begging and stealing: it was not uncommon to hear a 12-or 13-year-old, already an accomplished pick-pocket, relate his latest escapade in pilfering a wallet and evading the police. Practically all of these children smoked and could curse in a manner certain to elicit the admiration of men many years their senior. In traveling about the country they quickly learned how to ride passenger trains without paying and the best manner to ride freight trains. It was not uncommon to encounter children during the summer in Moscow or Sverdlovsk with whom one had spent the winter in the Crimea.

- 25X1 4. The Detpriyemnik [redacted] were usually small, old buildings badly in need of repair. [redacted] they were 25X1
staffed by a director, a few assistants, and a number of governesses.
25X1 The Detpriyemnik [redacted] had about 40 children, most of whom
were boys. The boys and girls were separated and each sex slept in a
25X1 large room. The Simferopol Detpriyemnik had enough beds for all the
children, [redacted] that during the war many children slept on the
floor for lack of beds. The entire area of the Detpriyemnik was
surrounded by a wooden fence over two m high which had several strands
of barbed wire strung along the top. There were no guards except for
an attendant at the gate. The meals were very plain and simple, the
daily diet invariably consisting of 500 grams of bread, gruel,
25X1 potatoes, and soup. Meat, butter, milk, and eggs were rarely served
[redacted] The diet was inadequate for the older children,
who always complained about being hungry. Since the Detpriyemnik was
only a reception and processing center, no classes of any kind were
taught. There was a small library, but no movies or organized
activities. Outside of general tidying of quarters, there was no work
for the children. Clothing was not given to children unless they were
being sent somewhere by the Detpriyemnik, and then it was usually old
and worn.

5. Children up to 16 years of age were accepted by the Detpriyemnik; and, although some children as young as eight were there, most of them were from 12 to 16 years old. They rarely remained at the Detpriyemnik for more than a month. The turnover was quite high; 10 to 15 children might leave one morning and an equal number be brought in by the militia the evening of the same day. If it was discovered that a child's parents were alive, attempts were made to locate them; the remaining children were disposed of as quickly as possible. Those children under 13 were sent to a Detdom (Detskiy dom), a children's home; those over 14 years of age were sent to an apprentice (remeslenny) school, a sovkhaz, a kolkhaz, or, especially in the case of 16-year-olds, directly to a factory. Children under 16 who were apprehended for a serious crime were sent to a camp for delinquent children (Detskaya koloniya); those over 16 who were apprehended for a serious crime were sent to prison. If it became known that a child had escaped repeatedly from Detpriyemniki, he was sent to a delinquent school, where he remained until he was 16 years old.

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